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\* INTIMATE CORRESPONDENCE FROM WASHINGTON \*  
\* BY RATH \*  
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Washington, D. C., Dec. 29.—

I am informed that the clerks in the general postoffice who have charge of the postal savings bank are working every day now until 6 o'clock—two hours a day overtime without pay—and have not yet got through with the September pass books! This is Postmaster General Hitchcock's idea of efficiency and economy.

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Another idea of efficiency and economy as operated in the postoffice department is to decline to fill vacancies for \$1,600 and \$1,800 clerks and to shove \$900 clerks into those jobs and make them do the work. Result: inefficiency and an actual cutting of wages at a time when the cost of living has increased 15 per cent.

The conditions in the railway mail service are rapidly becoming intolerable.

When Mr. Hitchcock gets through with the postoffice department he may show a bookkeeping surplus, but what is the use of avoiding a bookkeeping deficit of two or three millions while congress, in 20 minutes, votes away seventy-five millions additional to the already overburdened pension roll, or the president recommends the passage of the French Spoliation claims, amounting to approximately six million, and which are over a hundred years old and are not

even in the hands of the descendants of the original claimants.

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In the audience which listened during the first day to the speech of Louis D. Brandeis before the senate committee on interstate commerce considering the problem of trusts was a gentleman who had written a book on the subject of efficiency as demonstrated by the great trust combinations.

His book favored the continuation of combinations subject to some form of regulation, on the ground that they were more efficient than any competitive instruments. When Mr. Brandeis had finished his argument exposing the inefficiency of organizations like the steel trust, this gentleman remarked: "There goes my book to —!"

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That dividends are profits is the remarkable decision just rendered by Royal E. Cabell, who has charge of enforcing the corporation tax law in the treasury department.

On its face this would not seem a remarkable decision, but insurance companies have come before the department with the plea that they ought not to pay a tax on the "dividends" which they hand to policy holders because as a matter of fact these "dividends" are not dividends, but are mere overcharges paid by the premium